

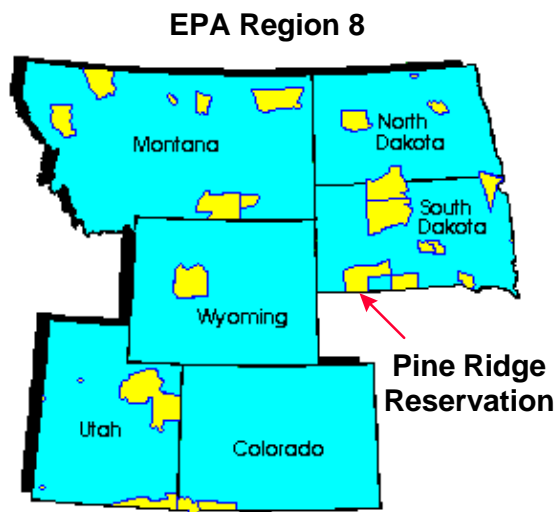
# CLEAN WATER ACT INDIAN SET-ASIDE GRANT PROGRAM



## SUCCESS STORY

### Oglala Sioux Tribe, Pine Ridge Reservation Wastewater Facility, South Dakota

The Oglala Sioux Tribe, located on the Pine Ridge Reservation in southwestern South Dakota, has an economy based on farming, livestock, and timber. The Reservation is located on 1.7 million acres of rolling grassland hills with spotted pine.



The Oglala Sioux Tribe had a serious, ongoing wastewater discharge problem during the late 1980s. The community's sanitation facilities consisted of an old sewage lagoon and lift station, which were constructed over 30 years ago. The sewage lift station operated only intermittently, resulting in a periodic discharge directly into White Clay Creek. Additionally, sewage that did make it to the treatment lagoon immediately leaked out of the bottom into a shallow aquifer or into the nearby stream. The stream did not support a viable ecological community and could not be used for recreational purposes. Testing of the water indicated that the stream was contaminated with fecal coliform.

To address the problems, the tribe used state funding to prepare a facilities plan for a new wastewater treatment facility. In 1992, EPA awarded an ISA grant to the tribe in the amount of \$1,143,215. The tribe hired an Indian-owned engineering firm to design improvements to the system. The facilities included a lift station and a lagoon sized to handle 750,000 gallons per day to serve the 700 homes and 3,500 people in the community. After overcoming many obstacles, including changing the design to avoid problems with easements and to reduce costs, construction was completed by an Indian-owned construction contractor. The facilities have been operating successfully since December 1995, and the new lift station has prevented direct discharges to White Clay Creek. The stream is now safe for recreational use.

This project was particularly successful in that the Oglala Sioux Tribe managed all of the

administrative, technical and environmental requirements associated with constructing a large scale construction project. Generally, oversight of ISA projects of this magnitude are managed either by the EPA regional office or the Indian Health Service on behalf of the tribe. The tribe demonstrated its capacity to successfully administer wastewater infrastructure projects via Indian-owned firms.